
From: Pittman, Marissa <marissa.pittman@dillard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 8:35 PM
To: House & Governmental Affairs
Cc: SGA Dillard University
Subject: Fair Maps and Representation Testimony

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Marissa Elizabeth Pittman

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Hello, my name is Marissa Pittman. I am a native Memphian; however, I am a resident and voter in New Orleans. I attend the illustrious Dillard University, a Sophomore Mass Communication and Public Policy scholar. In my time in New Orleans, I have become an active member of the community both on campus, as Chief of Staff for the 86th Administration of our Student Government Association, and off-campus partnering with organizations, such as the Power Coalition for Equity and Justice and the Delores Taylor Arthur School for Young Men.

Through these experiences, I have witnessed the power of community members, businesses, and local organizations whom we are advocating for today. I would like to draw your attention to the pressing issue of redistricting, fair and equitable maps, and its effects on Dillard University, the oldest of the historically Black colleges or universities in Louisiana.

As Chief of Staff, I have witnessed firsthand the effects of federal underfunding of Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

As the maps are currently drawn, there is only one majority Black congressional district. With the adoption of Senator Field's congressional maps, there could be two majority Black congressional districts. This could open the possibility for support for vital legislation, such as the IGNITE HBCU Excellence Act. In October, I led the effort, along with other members of the Progressive Administration, to contact our congressional delegation about supporting the act, which according to university administration, would provide vital funding for our campus.

New maps would provide more representation of the issues directly affecting students. The maps that you and your colleagues choose will have lasting impacts on my peers and me, as we begin to start our families and embark on our careers. If you care about Black community members, I urge you to support Senator Field's proposed map.

Best,
Marissa Pittman